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THE REUTER TRANSCRIPT REPORT

AMERICAN INTERESTS

Airs: Nov. 17, 1990

Guests: FBI Director of Counterintelligence Douglas Gow, former CIA Director Stansfield Turner, and former National Security Council consultant Roy Godson

Topic: Spy, Counterspy: How Safe Are America's Secrets?''
EMBARCOED UNTIL 5 P.M. NOV. 16

The editor of the report is Robert Doherty. Steve Ginsburg, Tim Ahmann, Peter Ramjug and Paul Schomer also are available to help you. If you have questions, please call 202-898-8345. For service problems inside the District of Columbia, call 202-898-8355; outside D.C., call 1-800-537-9755.

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NARRATOR: A hundred thousand Soviets are expected to visit the U.S. this year. More than 70,000 Chinese will also arrive. How many of them will be spies after American secrets? And how many Americans with access to top secret information will be willing to make a deal with them? As the Cold War recedes, the secrets foreigners are after are increasingly the secrets of America's economic success.

Spy-counterspy: How safe are America's secrets? From Washington, this is AMERICAN INTERESTS.

We'll hear first from Douglas Gow, chief of counterintelligence for the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and then in our Washington studios we'll hear from Stansfield Turner, director of the Central Intelligence Agency under President Carter, and Roy Godson, a former consultant to the National Security Council and the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board.

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For most of the world, the warming of the U.S.-Soviet relations under Mikhail Gorbachev was a welcome change from the rancorous years of the Cold War. But for America's intelligence community, glasnost and perestroika have, if anything, made life more difficult. For with glasnost comes openness, and with openness relaxed vigilance as Soviet visitors come to the U.S. Indeed, many intelligence specialists point to the detente era

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of the 1970s as a time when America lowered its guard with disastrous results.

Soviets gained unprecedented access to valuable political and military secrets. This year FBI officials estimate that 100,000 Soviets will visit the U.S., among them a number of intelligence agents charged with collecting sensitive information from military and commercial sources. Oftentimes the targets of foreign espionage are Americans with access to top secret information. The 1980s were labelled the decade of the spy because of men like John Walker of the U.S. Navy, Ronald Pelton of the National Security Agency, and Larry Chin of the CIA, all of whom went to prison for selling sensitive military secrets to the Soviets and Chinese.

Another area of increasing concern is foreign espionage directed at U.S. businesses. In a recent case, the French intelligence agency, the DCSE, was caught trying to recruit employees at European branches of IBM and Texas Instruments as agents in a plan to pass competitive secrets to French companies. The FBI is the first line of defense in protecting America's economic and military secrets, and counterintelligence is the FBI's largest single program.

But counterintelligence takes up a minuscule portion of the estimated \$30 billion the U.S. will spend this fiscal year on intelligence. The question: Is it enough?

For the past year the man in charge of FBI counterintelligence has been Douglas Gow, former chief of the FBI field office in Houston.

MR. KONDRACKE: Welcome to AMERICAN INTERESTS. I'm Morton Kondracke. Mr. Gow, thanks very much for being with us. Over the past several years there have been a series of disasters in counterintelligence—the Pelton case, the Walker case, exposure of CIA agents in Cuba, and so on. What is the FBI doing to prevent disasters of this kind from occurring in the future?

MR. GOW: Well, when you say `disasters,'' I'm not so sure that's a correct term. While all these cases in themselves certainly show that there are weaknesses and these individuals did a lot of damage, also at the same time there have been a number of investigations that have been investigated by the FBI and other agencies involved in this, you know, counterintelligence business that we have uncovered and stopped the same type of activity from happening before it actually happened. That doesn't mitigate what these individuals have done.

What are we doing today? We are continuing to, you know, improve the efficiency of our work, the way we do our work. As you're aware with the changing political climate that's going on particularly in Europe and with the Soviet Union, that is really, you know, causing us to rethink the way that we have done business in the past and how we have to continue to do business in the future.

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MR. KONDRACKE: Are the Soviets a continuing threat? Are they a worse threat in this improved climate, or a less threat?

MR. GOW: Right now what we're seeing on the part of the Soviet Union is a higher level of activity than we've seen, say, over the last five years.

MR. KONDRACKE: Why? What are they after?

MR. GOW: Well, they're after a broad range of things, but generally I would lump that into still military information is high on their list and the same with science and technology, that type of information—economic type of information.

MR. KONDRACKE: Does that mean that although Mikhail Gorbachev is talking peace to President Bush in fact the Soviet espionage apparat is still as forceful as ever and as still as hostile to our interests as ever?

MR. GOW: Well, again, what we're seeing through our investigations is a level of activity on the part of the Soviets, a collection activity that is clandestine in nature, that is the highest it's been, say, over the last five years.

MR. KONDRACKE: How many agents do they have trying to get information in the United States nowadays?

MR. GOW: I can't give you the specific number, but it is substantial. And it's not only that they use—they use a variety of methods, as all intelligence services do. So it's not something that's unique to the Soviets. In addition to those people that are bona fide intelligence officers, we also have illegal agents that have been infiltrated into the country. We've seen them make use of their emigre community and visitors, et cetera—you know, those type things, which is not uncommon to—other intelligence services also use a variety of means.

 $$\operatorname{MR.}$$ KONDRACKE: We're expecting samething like 100,000 Soviet visitors to this country this year.

MR. GOW: Yes.

 $\mbox{MR. KONDRACKE:}$ How many of them would you guess will be intelligence agents?

MR. GOW: A very, very small percentage of it, but we have seen in sampling of former emigre, you know, groups coming over--and I say 'groups,'' you're looking at a large segment of that where there have been a number of people that have been contacted by the Soviet intelligence services with the idea of getting them to cooperate with the service. It's not that we're seeing actual KGB agents coming in as an emigre, but we've seen people that have been contacted. And you have to remember a lot

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of these people coming over that are emigrating may have some type of, you know, a family left behind or there's some type of leverage that the Soviets could hold over them.

MR. KONDRACKE: Now, if the Soviets don't have the Czechs and the Poles to operate for them in the United States, are they switching to somebody else? I mean, are they trying to penetrate us through other third countries?

MR. GOW: We've seen evidence of that to a degree. Vietnam has come to our attention as acting as a surrogate in some respects for the Soviet Union.

MR. KONDRACKE: To do what?

MR. GOW: For collection of intelligence information.

MR. KONDRACKE: Among Vietnamese Americans?

MR. GOW: Through that community.

MR. KONDRACKE: To get?

MR. GOW: You know, classified types of information.

MR. KONDRACKE: Now, let me do ask about Iraq. Is the Bureau devoting more attention to the Iraqi threat since we're facing one over in the Gulf? Is it evident over here?

MR. COW: Yes, it is.

MR. KONDRACKE: And to what extent?

 $\,$ MR. GOW: Oh, it's much stronger at this time, you know, based on the situation.

MR. KONDRACKE: Okay, let me ask you now about allies and industrial espionage. I mean, people say now that national security has become economic security and competitiveness and so on. Are we being targeted by the intelligence services of allied countries who are after trade secrets, industrial secrets?

MR. GOW: Again, not an easy question to answer. I would say—when you're talking about countries targeting us, I would say no. Now, there have been entities within those countries, as you are well aware from the cases in the past, that have targeted us for specific, you know, proprietary information. I would say that that type of activity will probably continue; it may get much stronger. We certainly have a number of countries throughout the world that have growing economies, who have a need for that type of information or to bolster their emerging economies. And it's certainly something that poses a danger to us.

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MR. KONDRACKE: Have you seen any evidence that Japan's government is directing intelligence activity against American corporations or the government in order to get industrial secrets?

MR. GOW: No, I have none.

MR. KONDRACKE: And how about South Korea?

MR. GOW: No, I have not.

MR. KONDRACKE: How about France?

MR. COW: That poses a little different problem, the French. There have been some problems in the past that have been addressed, but at this time I know of nothing specific.

MR. KONDRACKE: Now, we have in our taped segment the report that the French intelligence service tried to penetrate IBM and Texas Instruments. Was there an official protest from the United States against that? Was action taken?

MR. GOW: You're probably addressing that question to the wrong individual. But there was action taken with regard to that.

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x x x to that.

 $$\operatorname{MR}$.$ KONDRACKE: So you are confirming that it really did happen?

MR. GOW: With regard to?

MR. KONDRACKE: To French penetration—attempted penetration of IBM and Texas Instruments.

MR. GOW: There was activity on their part. You know, I'm not quite sure on a definition of `penetration,'' and there was no activity that I knew of within this country.

MR. KONDRACKE: To what extent do you think it's going to be necessary in the future for our counterintelligence activities to be expanded to protect American industry from foreign competition?

MR. GOW: Well, again, that is a question that is under debate right now within the intelligence community. It's one that I don't think has been fully defined. We're asking questions and exploring it—you know, what roles should we play, if any, within that area? Because there's a lot of, you know, concern, you know, for—not violation but infringement of rights of individuals and so forth in looking at that whole arena. So I mean this is something that's going to have to be developed and established again based on, you know, what really constitutes a threat to national security.

MR. KONDRACKE: What is your own notion about the problem?

MR. GOW: Again, if there are items that are deemed to be, you know, embargoed, if certain things that we're talking about do fall within that area that it is a national secret and needs to be protected, then I would see a role for us in order to help protect that national secret, because, you know, one of the things that we've still got left is this country does have secrets that need to be protected, and we will continue to have those things. Some may be to give us the military advantage and

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the economic advantage. But once that is defined, then I would see, you know, within those parameters, a role, a tight role for us.

MR. KONDRACKE: Admiral Turner, Roy Godson, thanks very much for being with us. Admiral Turner, does the intelligence community need to redefine its mission such that we're paying a lot more attention to economic problems and competitiveness than toward what used to be called national security problems, military problems?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Oh, yes, but let's not get the idea that economics is not part of our nation's security. That's what's got to be redefined, is we've got to be sure that people in the intelligence community and elsewhere understand that our economic well-being is a very key part of our security.

MR. KONDRACKE: But does this mean that the FBI should be trying to protect Apple Computers, for example, against foreign competitive espionage or helping out, say, IBM to penetrate a foreign computer maker?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Well, not the latter, but the former--

MR. KONDRACKE: That would be a CIA job.

ADMIRAL TURNER: The former, yes; that is, we've got a whole new world out here, because what we're talking about is not really secrets; it's proprietary information in many cases. And what you have to do is say to yourself how is the intelligence community going to come to the aid of Apple Computer or Texas Instruments or whatever? Are we going to put people in their security offices? Are we going to help them conduct their communications in a secure way? I don't think we've addressed that yet; I don't think the country is ready for that.

MR. GODSON: If I may interject here. It seems to me there are a number of critical technologies. Congress has identified a number of critical technologies in both classified and unclassified publications that the Congress believes are essential and the Defense Department believes are essential to the future of the United States security.

MR. KONDRACKE: What, computers?

MR. GODSON: Bio-engineering, a variety of things-semiconductor types of research. Very advanced ideas for us now but would be important into the 21st century. And I would have thought this would be one of the missions of American counterintelligence in the future would be to safeguard these kinds of technologies as one of our counterintelligence missions.

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ADMIRAL TURNER: But they're not secrets; they're not defined, most of them—most of them are not defined as secrets.

MR. KONDRACKE: They're not classified, but they're certainly secrets, proprietary secrets.

MR. CODSON: And some of them are proprietary and some of them are classified to various levels.

MR. KONDRACKE: Now, just to be clear about this, should the CIA bug the board room of Toyota and hand the transcripts over to General Motors? I mean, should there be an offensive capability—

MR. GODSON: That's a different—now you are raising a different question. I take the view that this would be a mistake for the United States for various reasons. I don't think our competitiveness is really dependent and our economy is really dependent on getting access to that kind of information. I know of very few countries in history that have actually been able to make a substantial difference to their economy based on acquiring technology illegally from other countries. That's the first reason I'd suggest this is not a very fruitful way of improving the American economy. Secondly,—

MR. KONDRACKE: Let me ask the two of you, then, the question that I asked Mr. Gow. Are the Japanese or the South Koreans trying to commit espionage against American corporations, to hand the information over to their industries?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Well, you're asking the wrong person, because I don't know what's going on in the actual world today because I've been out for a long time.

MR. KONDRACKE: Was there anything like that going on when you were in--

ADMIRAL TURNER: What I'm saying is there are certainly instances in the past when friendly, quote, countries have tried to get proprietary information out of American businesses.

MR. KONDRACKE: Beyond the French?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Beyond the French.

MR. KONDRACKE: Japanese?

ADMIRAL TURNER: I'm not able to disclose.

MR. CODSON: I think one would have to expect that in the past there have been attempts to acquire American technology; there will be ongoing attempts to acquire American

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technology.

MR. KONDRACKE: Japanese? South Korean?

MR. GODSON: I think Asian as well as European.

MR. KONDRACKE: Do you think Mr. Gow was telling the truth when he said no about the Japanese?

MR. GODSON: I wouldn't be able to comment on whether he--what he was trying to say in that particular statement. But the real point is we have to protect our technologies, but I would say it would be a diversion of our intelligence resources. We're facing major intelligence problems into the 1990s and 21st century, redefining our mission and trying to sort of identify the new forces that are at work in the world. And for us to try to get involved in improving the American economy by using American secret technology and human resources which are so precious and so few to involve themselves in this kind of activity would be a diversion of our activities. I don't think we'll get very much for the American economy. And, secondly, legally this presents us with all sorts of problems in disseminating this knowledge in the United States. We are not the French government--we don't own companies; the American government doesn't own American companies. The French have an easier time of it.

MR. KONDRACKE: So you're saying that we should not be engaged in offensive intelligence, espionage of our own, in order to help our corporations, but that we should be involved in defensive counterintelligence in order to protect the secrets that we have?

MR. GODSON: That would be my position.

ADMIRAL TURNER: That's a plain contradiction.

MR. KONDRACKE: Why?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Are you going to help the company keep the Soviets out of their doors but you're not going to help them get into other people's doors? Of course you're going to do that. There is a very clear limit to how much you go. I don't like the idea of bugging the Toyota board room. But I have seen instances when you've stumbled almost onto some very helpful information about what people are going to bid on various contracts and so forth. And not to use that, if it's appropriate—and it's often very difficult; there are legal problems and there are problems if you help one American company—what about the others, and what if the American company is half-owned by the Japanese or something? I mean, I don't want to say this is a simple straightforward issue, but I would never turn down the opportunity to consider whether this piece of information would be useful to American business.

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MR. KONDRACKE: If you discovered that Toyota was working on a car that ran on water, you'd call up General Motors and say, hey, you need to know this.

ADMIRAL TURNER: I would call up the Department of Commerce and they would be the ones who would have to handle that, and I worked on that when I was director of Central Intelligence, not just to get secrets or spying information to business, but I think the intelligence community should help our business community understand what's going on all around the world in the economic sphere, most of which is not going to be classified—but American business is in a world market, and it's got to understand what's going on in that market. And the individual little guy in Paducah, Kentucky, doesn't have the resources to go out and figure that out.

MR. KONDRACKE: But you aren't going to help individual corporations compete against their individual foreign adversaries?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Oh, I will under certain circumstances, but it's very limited and it's not something where I would target the bulk of this intelligence activity of our country.

MR. KONDRACKE: Now, what about the Soviets? Have the Soviets, since we are now in an era of the end of the Cold War, have they receded as a threat to us?

MR. GODSON: Intelligence threat.

MR. KONDRACKE: As an intelligence threat?

MR. GODSON: I don't think so; I think the director of the FBI in charge was correct in that. That's my information from talking with defectors, from others who've studied the subject here and abroad. We see no diminution of Soviet presence abroad; in fact, if anything, the Soviets seem to be as active if not more active than they were before. By the way, the Soviets are just one of dozens of intelligence services operating against the United States.

***** The Reuter Transcript Report

American Interests (first add)

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MR. KONDRACKE: Okay, but who is a greater danger, the Japanese economic threat or the Soviet military threat? Or the Soviet economic threat, for that matter?

MR. GODSON: As I tried to suggest earlier, before, I don't think it's appropriate, I don't think it's very useful, I don't think it will make very much difference if the United States applies its intelligence capability to competition with Japan. We are losing the race with Japan not because we are not acquiring Japanese technology. That is not the problem in the United States. I know very few specialists who would argue that.

MR. KONDRACKE: Let me change the subject here. Admiral Turner, I believe that in 1979 you said that the United States does not face a major counterintelligence problem. Yet during the 1980s we had the Walker case and the Pelton case and the Chin case and the Pollard case. Weren't you wrong?

ADMIRAL TURNER: You're quoting me out of context. And I clearly said in that same statement that we cannot assume there are not more problems. We had lots of problems at that time. I was not in any way indifferent to those problems. We had lots of spies that we had caught, and there was every reason to believe there might be more.

MR. GODSON: But with respect, Admiral, I think that you and the other leaders of the intelligence community, I think were very sanguine at the time. I think--

ADMIRAL TURNER: Did I strengthen counterintelligence or did I weaken it, in your opinion, sir?

MR. GODSON: I think you strengthened it, but--

ADMIRAL TURNER: Okay, that's--

MR. GODSON: But I think you didn't do enough; I think you underestimated it. And, by the way, I think the Congress

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underestimated it initially, the media wasn't interested in it at that time as well. When the Reagan administration came in, it pledged to do much more in this regard. In my view it did a little bit, but it didn't do anywhere near enough. And I think the country by the mid-1980s realized there was a problem.

MR. KONDRACKE: What did he do that wasn't enough? Or what didn't he do that wasn't enough?

MR. GODSON: Well, one of the things that they didn't do is figure out what the major secrets that needed to be protected were; we had no centralized effort to figure out what were the key diplomatic, military, technological and political values that we needed to protect. We underestimated it.

ADMIRAL TURNER: Well, that's just what I did. One of the things I set up was a central agency or central unit to try to bring together all of that. But, you know, it's very easy to sit on the outside and say you're not doing enough. Counterintelligence is one of the most difficult, arcane areas of the whole intelligence world, and you always have got to remember that at the bottom of any counterintelligence is an American, which means that your counterintelligence effort spews over into the liberties and the privacy and the rights of American citizens. They've got to be intruded into in order to have good counterintelligence. But you also have to be careful how you do it. And the CIA in the past has done that to great excess. And we've got to be careful that we tread a fine line here.

MR. KONDRACKE: We'll come back to counterintelligence, if we can, but I want to ask about Iraq. Are you satisfied that the capabilities of the CIA are now sufficient that we have all the intelligence that we need in order to counter the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait?

MR. GODSON: Well, let me be modest and say I don't know all the capabilities we have. At the same time I am pretty sure we do not have the capabilities that we would need. I'd be surprised if anybody would claim that we had all the capabilities that we needed.

MR. KONDRACKE: We didn't know that he was going to invade for sure, did we?

MR. GODSON: According to Senator Boren, the chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, yes, warning was given to the United States well in advance of the invasion. And Senator Boren gave the intelligence community high marks for anticipating. Unfortunately, apparently, the policy makers did not take the warnings as seriously as they can. Now, in this particular case, there was apparently warning. It may have been ambiguous—the specifics haven't been made public. But Senator Boren gives them high marks for that.

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I would suggest, however, it wasn't just the question of the invasion; it was a question of understanding the forces at work in Iraq for some time. And I would suggest to you our Middle East intelligence, in spite of efforts to improve it from a long time ago, back into the seventies—I still think were nowhere near adequate. And I don't expect us to be adequate into the future. I think we have far too few, for example, case officers who speak Arabic, who understand Arabic, who can pass Arabs. I think we're going to be at a disadvantage in the Middle East for years to come.

MR. KONDRACKE: Well, presumably the Reagan administration would have fixed all those problems. Did it do it? Unfortunately, it did not.

MR. GODSON: No, it did not, it did not.

MR. KONDRACKE: Bill Casey didn't fix this problem?

MR. GODSON: In my view he did not. And his senior assistants at that time addressed the problem a little bit, they did a little bit, the ratchet moved in the right direction—but I think we will be disadvantaged in the Middle East in terms of dealing with terrorists, in terms of dealing with Iraqis and others in this region for years to come.

MR. KONDRACKE: Do you think we could find Saddam Hussein and do away with him if we wanted to?

ADMIRAL TURNER: I doubt it. I think that's a very tough assignment in the first place. In the second place, there's a presidential order against doing that.

MR. KONDRACKE: Should that presidential order, knowing what we know now about the kind of bad guys that there are in the world, like Saddam Hussein--should we have an order forbidding assassination of foreign leaders?

ADMIRAL TURNER: No, we should make it a law, because the last president tried to assassinate several people, in my opinion, and--

MR. KONDRACKE: Namely?

ADMIRAL TURNER: And this is against--

MR. KONDRACKE: Namely? Muamar Gaddafi and who--

ADMIRAL TURNER: Sheikh Fadlallah and Muamar Gaddafi.

MR. GODSON: Admiral, with respect--

ADMIRAL TURNER: And this is something that is below the American moral standards. In addition, if you talked about

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going in and getting Saddam Hussein today, how would you do it? Could you get an American in there to pull that trigger? He wouldn't live. So what do you do? You do what they did in the Sheikh Fadlallah case—you hire a gun, and that gun goes in. And in the Fadlallah case they killed 80 people in order to—

MR. KONDRACKE: Fadlallah was?

MR. GODSON: A spiritual leader.

ADMIRAL TURNER: A Lebanese man associated with a group that's terrorist, and they suspected--

MR. KONDRACKE: Would you not be in favor of attacking a terrorist outpost, if we could find it? In order to prevent a terrorist attack on us, should we not take pre-emptive action?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Absolutely.

MR. KONDRACKE: Well, then, what's wrong with trying to hit a terrorist leader?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Because when you target an individual, you're talking about an assassination which is a different matter than taking a military act against a group of people. And this is not in the American psyche. The proof of that is that for 29 years, the CIA was not prohibited from conducting assassinations. They plotted a lot. They never pulled one of:

MR. GODSON: Please let me interject.

MR. KONDRACKE: Okay.

MR. GODSON: I respectfully disagree very strongly with the statement that the United States tried to assassinate Sheikh Fadlallah. There is no evidence on the record of this. I spent time interviewing the people involved who were supposed to have been responsible for this activity.

ADMIRAL TURNER: Did the CIA cancel the order after

MR. GODSON: I repeat again: the president never ordered it. I don't know that—the director of the Central Intelligence never ordered it. The intelligence committees looked into this matter. Nobody has ever confirmed this.

Admiral, I'm surprised that you make that particular statement.

On the broader question, though, however, whether we should—

MR. KONDRACKE: We're almost out of time.

MR. GODSON: Well, on the broader question, I would

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argue that we definitely don't want to (inaudible). We are the only democracy in the world that ever would have passed a law or any prohibition, and I think most other democracies think that we're mistaken in passing this particular prohibition.

ADMIRAL TURNER: We're the best democracy also.

 $$\operatorname{MR}$.$ KONDRACKE: Admiral Turner, Roy Godson, thanks very much for being with us.

For AMERICAN INTERESTS, I'm Morton Kondracke.

END OF AMERICAN INTERESTS

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The Reuter Transcript Report

American Interests (second and final add)

Airs Nov. 17, 1990

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